

# ***Lesson 16***

## ***Recognizing 4-H'ers Accomplishments***

### ***Materials:***

- Poster Board marked with puzzle shapes
- Colored Markers
- Overhead slides or PowerPoint Slides
- Paper and pencil for each group
- Sticky wall
- Scissors or sharp knife to cut poster board

### ***Objectives:***

1. To help participants understand the role of recognition in positive youth development programming.
2. To provide information needed to determine the method for recognizing youth that is most appropriate to the situation.
3. To increase understanding of the National 4-H Recognition Model

### ***What to do -***

Introduce the need for recognition in a youth development program.

### ***What to Say -***

Just as we need feedback when we are communicating with others, we need feedback on our efforts to contribute to the group or to master skills. Recognition of these efforts provides this feedback. Young people want to know what they have done well and what needs to be improved. Evaluation and an understanding of what was learned are important parts of the educational program. Youth development professionals must be skilled in providing recognition that supports growth and in training staff to understand and use recognition appropriately.

A few years ago 4-H took a good look at what the organization was doing with recognition and the beliefs about recognition that support positive youth development. The study concluded that recognition is an important component of the 4-H experience for both youth and



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

Use PowerPoint or overhead slide to support discussion of need for recognition.

adults. While appropriate recognition takes many forms, recognition for 4-H youth is based on the following beliefs:

### ***Slide One and Two:***

- Recognition is a basic human need.
- Recognition must be designed to build positive self-esteem.
- A balance between intrinsic (intangible) and extrinsic (tangible) recognition is essential (to address intrinsic and extrinsic motivation).
- Adult support is essential.
- All 4-H'ers need to experience recognition for their efforts.
- Recognition is more meaningful when it occurs soon after it is earned.
- Appropriate recognition for individual 4-H'ers varies with their stage of development, past experiences, family lifestyle, community and cultural heritage.
- Opportunities for self-assessment and reflection within the recognition process allow youth to learn and grow.
- 4-H'ers should be permitted to exercise individual choices in learning and participation and be recognized accordingly.

As a result of this study, a model for appropriate and effective recognition was developed. This model became the National 4-H Recognition Model. This lesson will address the use of that model in your youth development program.

Introduce the activity to identify the kinds of recognition currently in use in local and state programs.

Let's start by identifying the kinds of recognition you are currently using in your program. I have placed paper at your tables. I would like each of you to make a list on one of these sheets of paper of all the things you do to recognize youth in your existing youth program.



## ***What to do-***

Give participants time to make their lists. Monitor the progress of the group. When groups have had sufficient time to build their lists, present the information on the five types of recognition used in the national recognition model using the overhead or power point slides.

## ***What to Say-***

A comprehensive 4-H recognition program includes five types of accomplishments. Each is unique in the way it motivates young people and recognizes their achievements.

The five types of accomplishments 4-H measures for recognition are:

1. Participation in educational experiences
2. Progress toward self-set goals
3. Achieving standards of excellence
4. Peer competition
5. Excellence in Cooperation

### ***Slide Three:***

Participation

Recognizes attending, participating and successfully completing an activity. Participation has simple requirements that are well publicized and known. Participation recognition can be earned many times. It demonstrates that a young person was “there” and can take the form of names in the paper, event T-shirts, participation ribbons, etc. Participation recognition usually comes from someone the young person cares about such as a project leaders, camp counselors, teachers, etc.

### ***Slide Four:***

Progress Toward Self-Set goals

The second form of recognition is progress toward self-set goals. This form of recognition is not limited to the outcome at the end of the project or effort. It can occur within the action process and can be stimulated with questions like “how are you coming along?” or “how is it going?” This form is particularly useful when several steps are involved in reaching a goal.



Recognizing accomplishment of steps along the way can provide motivation to continue the effort.

Adults need to help youth set realistic goals that are likely to result in successful outcomes. But self-set goals are just that, and youth will have the final decision as to what they will be. Here are some keys to understanding recognition of progress.

1. It is used with all ages
2. Goals must be realistic and reachable
3. Progress is evaluated by both the youth and adult
4. Progress is measured using the young persons own goals and plans

**Slide Five:**

Achievement of Standards

Recognizing accomplishments as they compare to a predetermined standard, is a more extrinsic form of recognition.

1. The standard used to measure success is established by an outside source or specialist and serves as a measuring stick. Recognition is determined by how closely performance matches that measuring stick.
2. To use this form of recognition, adults must assure that the standards are clearly defined and that youth are well informed about them. Young people must know what they are working toward.
3. Standards measurement involves a judging system and rating categories are often used. 4-H uses a ribbon placement system in recognizing the achieving of a standard of performance. A blue ribbon indicates excellent accomplishment. A red ribbon indicates a rank of “very good” and a white ribbon indicates a “good” ranking.
4. Recognition based on a set of standards measures quality of work and not a comparison to the performance of others. Judges must be well informed of the standards. They must be impartial and be diligent about not comparing work to that of other youth.



**Slide Six**

## Peer Competition

The next form of recognition has to do with peer competition. There are some qualifications that must be discussed with this form of recognition as it supports positive youth development. The quest to be a champion can be a strong motivator for some youth. It is not a motivator for all youth.

1. For youth under the age of 12-14 who are not yet skilled abstract thinkers, the ability to deal with the ambiguities that may accompany competitive judgment calls are not in place. In addition, because they are maturing at very different rates, comparison to peers can negatively influence their concept of their own potential. Recognition based upon competition with peers is not recommended for youth under the age of 12.
2. The desire to win may overpower the desire to learn from the experience. It is easy to confuse the means with the ends when striving for recognition through competition. Youth development professionals must help youth remain focused on the experience rather than the competition and prepare youth for both winning and not winning.
3. Rules and procedures must be clearly spelled out, so that everyone knows exactly what will be judged and how that judging will take place.
4. Competition can be high risk and can bring with it stress, conflict, hard feelings, and disagreement. Negative stress and conflict can be reduced or eliminated by making sure that everyone involved understands exactly what is going to be expected.
5. Competition may generate publicity for your group. It may result in trophies, scholarships plaques etc. It is important that the adults helping youth remember that this form of recogni-



tion is designed to promote the development of youth rather than the success of their program.

6. As these factors would indicate, competition should be optional. It is a good avenue of recognition for some youth but does not serve as a positive motivator for all youth.

**Slide Seven:****Excellence in Cooperation**

Our last category is Cooperation. There is a belief out there that competition brings out the best in us. In reality, cooperation brings out the best in us. We need to talk about that with our youth as we become a more interdependent a society.

1. Cooperation involves all the youth in your group and provides opportunities to be involved in group-identity issues and attempt to find solutions with the group.
2. Cooperation is measured against mutually agreed upon goals and supports looking at a variety of ideas.
3. Recognition for cooperation gives attention to the way a group works. Leadership skills that promote the involvement of everyone in the group are supported.
4. The ultimate goal of cooperation is not recognition. Conflict that occurs around recognition for cooperation will be around the procedures for working together rather than over who has done the best work.
5. Everyone in the group is recognized when measuring cooperative efforts.

Assign each group to a particular method of recognition but do not let groups know what other groups have been assigned. Tell them they are to keep their category a secret from other groups. Give each group a poster board. Instruct groups to choose from the list of recognition activities they generated earlier, the ones that belong to the type of recognition they have been assigned and depict those activities creatively on their poster board.



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

Make sure everyone understands the assignment. Then move about the room to monitor progress. When groups have completed the task, assign each group a partnering table and instruct them to exchange puzzle pieces with that table group.

Facilitate a reporting of the puzzles placed on the sticky wall.

I am going to give each of your table groups a slip of paper that has printed on it a category of recognition. Please do not let other table groups know what your category is. I want your group to refer to the list you made of the kinds of recognition occurring in your current program, and to choose from that list the ideas that fit the category you have been assigned.

I am also going to give each table group a poster board and colored markers and I would like you to depict the recognition forms you select on this board in a format that can be cut out to make a puzzle. That is, each recognition idea will be a separate puzzle piece. When you have done this, I want you to cut your puzzle pieces apart.

Now that you have completed your puzzle, I am going to assign you a partnering group and I would like you to exchange puzzle pieces, but do not tell your partnering table the category your puzzle pieces represent. The task now for each group will be to put the puzzle you have been given together and to determine what category it represents. When you have the puzzle completed and the category identified, check to see if you had identified other ways of recognizing youth in this category and make a list of those on paper with a colored marker. Put the puzzle and your attached list on the sticky wall.



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

When all groups have reported their work, lead a discussion of the appropriateness of various forms of recognition based upon age of youth involved and how these forms might best be used. Mention the crossover between some of the forms of recognition. Close the discussion with a reminder to use many types and levels of recognition within the programs to meet the needs of all youth.

I want each group that put a puzzle together to tell me what category they believe they were looking at and why they selected that category. I would also like you to tell the group the recognition ideas that you added to your category.

The National 4-H Recognition Model is a comprehensive plan that acknowledges positive learning behaviors in young people. In all aspects of the model, recognition is based on the young person's involvement, participation, and/or efforts. The model identifies recognition appropriate for individuals and groups participating in 4-H youth educational experiences. It is assumed that the recognition is designed to meet the needs, interests, and aspirations of young people from different backgrounds and life experiences.

It is easy to fall into a rut with the forms of recognition we offer. We need to step back and look at the individual youth in our program to see what would motivate and reward them and incorporate new things into our recognition efforts. A balanced program will have opportunities to receive recognition in all five categories.

Talk about the importance of preparing adults who will be judging in peer competition and against a standard.

As you can see, adults who will be judging the work of youth in the areas of standards and peer competition, must be well prepared. Section V, Lesson 16 of your



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

Give each team one of the project curriculum pieces. Direct them to generate an idea for recognition in this project in the recognition category they have been given in the puzzle building exercise.

Move around the room to assist where needed and monitor progress. When the group is ready, facilitate the reporting of their efforts.

Introduce avenues of recognition outside the club.

handbook provides good information to help you prepare judges. The material discusses interview judging, what judges need to know, how they can prepare for the judging experience, a suggested judging procedure, sample questions, how to write a critique and an explanation of three ribbon systems commonly used. We are not going to review this material here, but you will want to use anytime you are providing an experience using one of these two recognition models.

You have been given a set of project curriculum. Look through this material and develop an idea for recognizing youth in this project that fits the category you were assigned when you made your puzzle.

In addition to the actual club experience, members and leaders are encouraged to participate in local, state and national events as well. As a youth development professional it is your job to maintain contact with state and national programs that are providing developmental experiences for youth and to connect the youth in your program to these opportunities.

At the end of Section V, Lesson 16 in your handbook, there is a listing of the national opportunities that are available to youth annually.



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

Give a brief description of these offerings or ask participants to take turns reading each one aloud.

National 4-H Week is celebrated the first full week in October. Over 6 million 4-H'ers nationwide celebrate with special activities including window displays, community projects, attending a church service as a group, field trips, outings and more. National 4-H Council provides a packet of ideas for celebrating National 4-H Week that includes sample news releases, radio spots, clip art and more. Visit your 4-H Office and ask to see the 4-H Week packet that usually arrives in early summer.

National 4-H Conference - This event is held at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland near Washington, D.C. in the spring and is planned and conducted by teens. At the National 4-H Conference, teen delegates take the lead by serving on consulting groups to make recommendations for future directions for 4-H and by accepting responsibility on one of the operations committees to help conduct the events and functions of the Conference. Activities include a visit to Capitol Hill and meetings with senators and/or representatives. This event is sponsored and conducted by National 4-H Council and CSREES. Contact your county 4-H Agent for more information.

The National 4-H Youth Technology Leadership Team -The N4HYTLT consists of 4-H teens from across the U.S.A. who share a commitment to using their technological skills to help integrate more technology into all 4-H programs and to close the Digital Divide that separates the technology haves and have-nots in America.

National 4-H Technology Conference – The National 4-H Technology Conference was created on the idea that State 4-H Programs need to increase their technology projects and programs and also that states need to be more proactive when dealing



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

with teaching technology to youth. Youth take leadership in planning and conducting the conference. It is held in the summer, and is sponsored by CYFERnet (Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network)/CSREES.

National 4-H Congress is the flagship event of the 4-H program. The program is built upon the Cooperative Extension System's belief that young people can be significant partners in addressing the issues that face our nation especially those affecting youth. Each year a National Design Team of Extension educators, 4-H youth, and 4-H adult volunteers analyze current youth issues and determine the most effective ways to address them. The program combines plenary sessions, seminars, discussion groups, and a service learning experience. The nation's most outstanding community leaders, speakers, and educators present the most current and timely information available.

Citizenship Washington Focus is a national 4-H event held at the National 4-H Center during June and July. There are seven different sessions offered at a cost of under \$500. This excellent week long event is open to high school age youth, not just 4-H'ers. Those attending CWF will increase their leadership skills, gain a much broader understanding of citizenship, learn a great deal about their nation's capitol and the federal government and have fun.

Exchange Programs supplement the world citizenship programming that occurs within a 4-H club. One or more of the following four opportunities may be available beyond the club.

IFYE - The International Four-H Youth Exchange (the "F" originally stood for farm) provides an opportu-



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

nity for 4-H'ers from around the world to visit another country to learn about other lifestyles and cultures and to spread goodwill and understanding. There are several different options and various lengths of stay with six weeks to six months being common. IFYE's are older 4-H'ers that have, depending on the exchange, completed high school or graduated from college.

4-H Japanese Exchange provides an opportunity for youth ages 12- 18 from the U.S. to visit Japan and for Japanese youth to visit America. Participants live with a host family in this fully chaperoned program. They share everyday life and activities with many new people. State 4-H specialists and local 4-H agents handle the logistics of this program for youth in their communities.

State Sponsored Exchange Programs are available for youth in many states in which relationships with youth development professionals in countries around the world have been developed. State 4-H specialists and local 4-H agents handle the logistics of these exchange opportunities for youth in their communities.

State-to State Exchange Programs between individual counties in different states who are interested in learning more about one another's area of the United States are available as interest arises. Many states participate in this program. Local 4-H agents make the connections and arrangements for these exchange opportunities for the youth in their communities.

Wonders of Washington (WOW) - National 4-H Council provides this "ultimate Washington experience" for youth groups (students in grades 6 - 12) of 25 or more. Two and six day programs are available.



## ***What to do-***

## ***What to Say-***

Lodging is provided at the National 4-H Center. WOW includes field trips and workshops that highlight the historical, political and cultural attractions of Washington, DC.

There are also a variety of national 4-H contests in various project areas. These are for individuals and teams that have won at the county and state levels. Your county 4-H staff can explain more about these opportunities.

Opportunities for professional development are available regionally and nationally for both adult and youth leaders and for youth development professionals.

Regional 4-H Volunteer Leader Forums – Adult and teen leaders from multi-state regions can attend these annual meetings to learn new information, gain new skills, and share ideas with other 4-H leaders. Contact your local 4-H Agent to find out when the next Regional Leader Forum is scheduled in your area.

NAE4-HA (National Association of Extension/4-H Agents) – affiliate membership in the professional association of 4-H Agents is open to the staff of partnering organizations. This internationally recognized and inclusive network focuses on the needs of the youth development profession and sponsors a national conference for youth development professionals each year.



## ***Recognition***

**Is a basic human need**

**Builds self esteem**

**Should be part of all 4-H experiences**

**Can take many forms**

**Requires adult support**



## ***Recognition***

**Should be offered in a balance of  
tangible and intangible forms**

**Is given to all youth who are  
participating**

**Provides public feedback soon after  
the accomplishment**



## ***Recognition***

**Includes an avenue for self  
assessment and reflection**

**Supports individual choice in  
learning and participation**



## ***Participation***

**Simple Requirements that are well  
publicized**

**Earned many times**

**Presented at activity**

**Appropriate for activity and youth**

**Not expensive but valued by youth**



## ***Progress Toward Self Set Goals***

- 1. For all ages and activities**
- 2. Realistic and reachable**
- 3. Uses youth's own goals and plan**
- 4. Evaluated by youth and adults**
- 5. Measured against youth's goals**



## ***Achievement of Standards***

- 1. Established by specialists**
- 2. Clearly defined and not changed**
- 3. Uses rating categories**
- 4. Measures quality**



## ***Peer Competition***

- 1. Not for young children**
- 2. Can confuse the means with the ends**
- 3. Needs clear rules and procedures**
- 4. Can be high risk**
- 5. May generate publicity**
- 6. Should be optional**



## ***Excellence in Cooperation***

- 1. Involves all fully**
- 2. Uses mutually agreed upon goals**
- 3. Gives attention to the way the group works**
- 4. Ultimate goal is not recognition**
- 5. Recognizes all**



